



GUARDIAN OF PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

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Preparedness and Planning

Michigan Flu Advisory Board Seeks Members

The purpose of the Flu Advisory Board is to enhance communication during the flu season by deploying appropriate resources in a timely manner and making rapid decisions about flu vaccine supply. FAB is committed to controlling disease outbreaks and communicating effectively during urgent situations. MDCH would like to extend an invitation for any interested health care professional to become involved in the Flu Advisory Board. If you're interested, please email Courtney McFeters, MDCH Influenza Health Education Coordinator, at McFetersC@michigan.gov.

National Hazardous Materials Fusion Center

The International Association of Fire Chiefs will lead the development of a [new data center](#) that will collect and analyze hazardous materials incident data to enhance first responder tactics, operations, policy and training, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). The National Hazmat Fusion Center will be a secure, web-based network to facilitate information sharing for first responders training for and responding to hazardous materials incidents.

New Hospital Surge Model

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) released a new web-based [interactive tool](#) to help hospitals and emergency planners identify resource requirements to treat an influx of patients due to major disasters such as an influenza pandemic or a terrorist attack. The Hospital Surge Model provides essential resource information for emergency planning strategies and is able to estimate, by day, the number and flow of casualties needing medical attention for scenarios selected by users.

ASTHO Releases Two New SNS Reports

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officers (ASTHO) recently released [two reports](#) related to the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The first document, "Using the Private Sector to Support RSS Functions for the Strategic National Stockpile", describes how several health agencies are partnering with the private sector in areas such as staffing, transportation, facilities and inventory management. The second report, "2007-2008 Regional SNS Workshops: Selected Presentations", highlights some of the promising practices presented during the November 2007-March 2008 series of six regional SNS workshops. These two reports and other resources are available on the SNS page of the ASTHO website.

MDCH's "Fifth Guy" Campaign

We all know a fifth person - the guy who doesn't wash his hands, the gal who shows up at work sick, the dude who sprays us with spittle. The

News

Community Health Leader Grants Available - Apply Now!

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Community Health Leaders (CHL) program each year honors ten outstanding and otherwise unrecognized individuals who overcome daunting odds to improve health and health care, especially to underserved populations in communities across the United States. The program elevates the work of these unsung heroes through enhanced recognition, technical assistance and new leadership opportunities. Ten awards in the amount of \$125,000 each will be made for the 2009 award cycle. Each new leader will receive a personal award of \$20,000 to recognize his/her accomplishments and \$105,000 to support the work for which the leader is recognized. The deadline for brief nominations is [November 7, 2008!](#)

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Read the Next *Guardian* Issue!
October 10, 2008

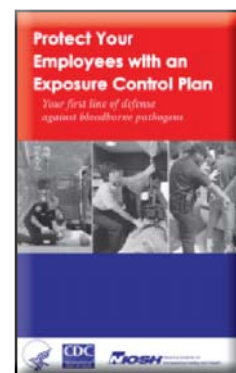
Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) has adapted public service announcements (PSA) from the Florida Department of Health to provide tips on how to say, "Hey, stop getting us all sick!" MDCH will broadcast these public service announcements statewide from November 2008 to February 2009. The PSAs are currently posted on the [MDCH website](#), and available for your use!

Health Literacy Resources

Two [new tools](#) help health writers improve readability. The Health Literacy Advisor is a commercial software package available from Health Literacy Innovations in Bethesda, MD. A Microsoft Word add-on, it calculates several readability indices. It also highlights difficult vocabulary and suggests alternative phrasing. Another tool is the Plain Language Thesaurus for Health Communications, a wiki organized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Marketing. You can access this thesaurus online.

NIOSH Tips for Employee Exposure Control

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) identified a number of problems with the Exposure Control Plans at fire, emergency medical services, and police departments. [Their brochure](#) provides with tips on how to avoid common problems. NIOSH recommends that agencies review their plan to see if it has any of the defects and revise the plan to fix the problems.



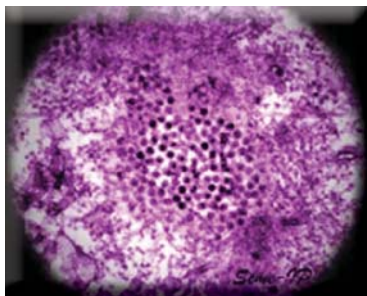
Surveillance

E. coli Cases in Michigan

The number of confirmed cases of *Escherichia coli* 0157:H7 cases across the state has increased. Lab tests confirm that there are twenty-four genetically linked confirmed cases across the state. In Ingham County, there are an additional twenty-one probable cases that have not been culture confirmed. At present, care for sick individuals is being limited to supportive care only. State health department officials believe this outbreak is food-borne in nature, and linked to a commercially distributed food item. For more information, please contact your local health department or the Michigan Department of Community Health.

Additional West Nile Virus Case Confirmed in Michigan

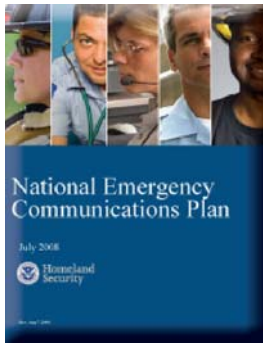
Macomb County health officials confirmed their first human case of West Nile Virus this year, bringing the state total to five. The Macomb County Health Department hasn't released details of the case, but said the potentially deadly virus was contracted in St. Clair Shores. The first confirmed human case in the state this year came in Lenawee County after an 81-year-old man tested positive for the virus. A Detroit resident also tested positive. Both individuals survived the infection. Human cases have dropped significantly this year, compared to 16, including four deaths, last year and 56 cases and seven fatalities in 2006. [State health officials](#) attribute the drop, at least in part, to a long winter that killed off many mosquitoes that carry the virus and infect humans.



Communications

National Emergency Communications Plan

Numerous after-action reports from major incidents throughout the history of emergency management in our nation have cited communications difficulties



among the many responding agencies as a major failing and challenge to policymakers. Recognizing the need for an overarching strategy to help coordinate and guide such efforts, Congress directed the Department of Homeland Security to develop the first [National Emergency Communications Plan](#) (NECP). The purpose of the NECP is to promote the ability of emergency response providers and relevant government officials to continue to communicate in the event of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters and to ensure, accelerate, and attain interoperable emergency communications nationwide.

MDCH Flu Website Updates

This year's theme, "Flu Vaccine: For Every One, Every Year" focuses on the importance of vaccinating the entire community against influenza, in order to protect those that are most vulnerable, with special efforts made this year to vaccinate school-aged children 6 months through 18 years of age. For up-to-the minute, Michigan-specific flu information and resources, check out the MDCH [influenza website](#) today. A wealth of information is available on where to get vaccinated, what to do if you get sick, where to find clinical laboratory and reporting information, as well as flu information for school and child care settings, individuals and families, and businesses and the workplace.

FEMA Launches Knowledge Base

The Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) is pleased to announce a new toll free number and email address for the Responder Knowledge Base (RKB). You can call 1-877-FEMARKB (1-877-336-2752) for live help with questions regarding the RKB, equipment, standards, available grants and many other topics. This service is available from 8am to 5pm (EST), Monday through Friday. Questions may be emailed at anytime to RKBMailbox@us.saic.com and will be acknowledged the next business day. Visit the [RKB website](#) for more information.

Communication Methods for People with Limited Speech

People with limited speech are an especially vulnerable population in any emergency or disaster. [This document](#), from the Augmentative and Alternative Communication Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center, provides information about communication methods for people who are not able to use their natural speech to communicate. This may include people with speech disabilities, individuals with cognitive difficulties, very young children, anyone under severe stress, people with significant hearing loss or anyone with limited English proficiency.

Pandemic Planning

States' Pandemic Preparedness

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices recently issued [a paper](#) summarizing an overall assessment of the current level of pandemic preparedness. It focuses on the four preparedness sectors of healthcare, commerce, education, and public safety and also identifies the following five areas in

need of improvement: 1) Workforce Policies, 2) Schools, 3) Situational Awareness, 4) Public Involvement, and 5) Public-Private Sector Engagement. The NGA press release and full text of the paper can be found online.

Plain Language Pandemic Fact Sheets Available

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed two plain language [fact sheets](#) titled, "Plan Now to Be Ready for the Next Flu Pandemic" and "The Next Flu Pandemic: What to Expect". These documents, about preparing for a flu pandemic, were created as a template for state and local health departments. These fact sheets have received interagency clearance. Two different versions of the fact sheets are available -- a PDF version with the CDC logo, and a Word version that can be locally customized.

CBO Paper on Pandemic Vaccine

In 2005, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published a plan that includes a series of measures, first to monitor the spread of disease in the event of a worldwide outbreak and then to facilitate a rapid response. That second step includes developing influenza vaccines and expanding the nation's capacity for producing influenza vaccine; creating stockpiles of antiviral drugs and other medical supplies (to avert an influenza pandemic or minimize its effects); coordinating federal, state, and local preparations; and planning for public outreach and communications. This Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [paper](#) focuses on the government's role in the vaccine market that stems from HHS's plan. It provides information on the current state of readiness, the additional expenditures likely to be necessary to achieve HHS's vaccine-related goals, the expenditures that are likely to be needed to maintain preparedness, and the approaches of other countries as they too face the prospect of an influenza pandemic.



The Reality of Pandemic Planning

Dr. Michael T. Osterholm, the director of the Center of Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) provided commentary on "hitting the wall" in regard to pandemic planning. He talks of changing his own approach to pandemic planning to move past the roadblock and move forward. The [full article](#) is available online.

Ethics and Pandemic Influenza: Maintaining Essential Functions

This article provides ethical guidance for pandemic planning, response, and resource allocation. The authors use ethical considerations to determine which public health responses to implement. When resources are limited, who will be helped? How will the public be included in decisions and responses? The full article is [available to subscribers](#).

Australians' Perceptions of Pandemic Influenza

An article published in "BMC Infectious Diseases" addresses how the public perceives a pandemic threat. The researchers utilized a telephone health survey to study how the pandemic threat is perceived and how prepared the public is for a pandemic. [The study](#) is available online.

Other News

Four Chinese Infants Die from Tainted Milk

On September 18, Chinese [officials reported](#) the death of a fourth baby in the country's expanding contaminated infant formula case. Over 6200 babies have

been sickened by milk powder tainted with the chemical melamine. Melamine is a whitish substance, usually used in conjunction with formaldehyde, used in the production of many products such as white boards and countertops. When ingested, melamine causes irritation of the mucus membrane and can lead to renal failure.

Battlefield Forensics

On July 17, authorities in Afghanistan captured a Pakistani woman named Aafia Siddiqui. She had first come to the attention of U.S. officials in late 2003 or early 2004, and they were deeply concerned by her links to al Qaeda, particularly in view of her extensive education in biology and the neurosciences. She had been educated at MIT and Brandeis, and it was feared that she had the ability to actually produce weapons of mass destruction (chemical, biological, radiological). As part of the ongoing investigation of Siddiqui, U.S. investigators reportedly have taken hair and saliva samples from her, as well as fingernail scrapings, to ascertain whether or not she has been in recent proximity to various substances that could be used in WMD production. The [information](#) being gathered not only has major intelligence applications but also is exceptionally important in making criminal cases against terrorist suspects captured by the military.

Training and Education

Date/Time	Event Description	Location
Online	NCBRT Training and eLearning Courses Available eLearning courses include: Preparing Communities for Agroterrorism, Prevention and Deterrence of Terrorist Acts, Foundational Awareness of Weapons of Mass Destruction/Terrorism, Effects of Weapons of Mass Destruction/Terrorism Incidents, Disaster Mental Health, and eCDLS (eCore Disaster Life Support).	Online
Online	Pediatric Prescribing Update: Bioterrorism Counteragents The purpose of this course is to help physicians effectively prescribe the drugs that have received approval for use in children, understand how the new labeling affects their practice, and obtain current information related to labeling changes.	Online
Online	Pediatrician Disaster Preparedness All families need a disaster plan. Chronically ill children and their families are especially at risk in the aftermath of a disaster. Through this online course , the American Academy of Pediatrics provides guidance to pediatricians on how they can prepare themselves, their patients, and their practices to deal with terrorism and disaster events. The non-member fee for this course is \$12. To register, please visit the PediaLink Learning Center website.	Online

Date/Time	Event Description	Location
Oct. 6, 2008	2008 MEMA Summit This three-day event will provide participants with information on the following events: Union University Devastated by EF-4 Tornado, Response, Recovery and Partnership During Iowa's Severe 2008 Weather, the AeroMed Crash at Spectrum Health Butterworth Hospital, and many others. In addition, the summit provides ample time to network with other emergency management professionals. Register by September 19 to receive a discounted fee. See the Michigan State Police's Emergency Management and Homeland Security website for full summit agenda, registration details, and more information.	Grand Traverse Resort - Acme, MI
Oct. 14, 2008 8:30am	Emergency Services Media Relations Seminar This intensive, four-day seminar has been developed especially for senior leaders, PIOs and others with media and public relations responsibilities in law enforcement, fire, medical, health, schools and other emergency services, hospitals, government and private organizations with crisis communication needs. This course is especially designed to train you how to work and partner with those in other fields during a crisis.	Virginia Beach Resort Hotel - Virginia Beach, VA
Oct. 16, 2008 1-2:30pm	Mass Antibiotic Dispensing: Engaging At-risk Populations The capacity to reach every person in the community is the goal of emergency preparedness planning. This will be especially important during a public health emergency that requires mass antibiotic dispensing to the entire population within the Cities Readiness Initiative goal of 48 hours. In this broadcast , experts in the process of defining, locating, and reaching at-risk populations as well as state and local public health professionals who have used this process will share their experiences.	OPHP Large Training Room (517) 335-8150
Oct. 21, 2008	Health Disparities Conference The conference will focus on racial and ethnic health disparities and the role of public health policy in reducing, and eventually eliminating, health disparities. Discussion topics will include racial and ethnic disparities related to health status, to access to health care, and to health outcomes. We will explore how public policy can be strengthened to improve access to healthier environments, to effective health programs, and to comprehensive, culturally competent health care for racial and ethnic populations. For more information, including registration details, please visit the conference website .	Marriott Renaissance Center - Detroit, MI
Nov. 3, 2008	Risk and Crisis Communication in the 21st Century This forum will examine changes and progress in risk and crisis communications, looming opportunities and threats to watch for, and practical applications for policy and practice. Through expert perspectives and small group interaction, it will present insights, analysis, and forecasts and will address top trends, best practices, and "futures-framework".	Washington, DC

Date/Time	Event Description	Location
Nov. 13, 2008	The NIOSH DREAM Workshop The <u>workshop</u> will convene subject matter experts, stakeholders and other interested parties to improve the prevention of disease and injury to people who work through supporting research, promotion of best practices, communication of effective policies, and engagement in productive partnerships. The broad aim of the breakout sessions is to seek stakeholder input in shaping a NIOSH research agenda for direct-reading methods as related to worker exposure in the workplace. The proceedings of the workshop will be published on the NIOSH Direct-Reading Methods website for comments.	Hilton Crystal City - Washington, DC
Nov. 13, 2008	International Bird Flu Summit Top leaders and key decision-makers of major companies representing a broad range of industries will meet with distinguished scientists, public health officials, law enforcers, first responders, and other experts to discuss pandemic prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Breakout topics will include (but are not limited to): surveillance and data management, community strategies, businessbased planning, and school-based planning.	Las Vegas, NV
Nov. 20-21, 2008	Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Train-the-Trainer This <u>two-day course</u> will provide participants with the skills to teach the CERT program, while emphasizing the basic course along with the development of a program in their community. Previous experience providing and facilitating instruction for adults is desirable. Note: This is a course for CERT trainers and program managers-not for individuals desiring to become CERT team members.	Auburn Hills, MI
Dec. 4, 2008	Developing Volunteer Resources This <u>one-day course</u> is designed to cover a broad range of issues in disaster volunteerism expanding on the concepts presented in the prerequisite FEMA Independent Study course, Managing and Developing Volunteers. Topics will include spontaneous volunteerism in disasters, liability issues, marketing, recruitment, and recognition of volunteers. There is no fee for this course. Visit the Michigan State Police website for further details and registration information.	Lansing, MI



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